

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6505

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, MY

SUBJECT: UMNO DEVELOPMENTS: SUPREME COUNCIL MEETS ON HARUN AND
OTHER ISSUES

REF: (A) KUALA LUMPUR 1446, (B) KUALA LUMPUR 1091

1. SUMMARY:INTRODUCTION. UMNO PARTY'S GOVERNING BODY,
SUPREME COUNCIL, MET FOR OVER FOUR HOURS MARCH 10 AT
PRIME MINISTER'S RESIDENCE TO DISCUSS VARIOUS IMPORTANT
ISSUES, INCLUDING UMNO YOUTH APPEAL FOR FORMER YOUTH
LEADER DATUK HARUN IDRIS' FULL POLITICAL REHABILITATION
(REF B), DISPUTE BETWEEN RULER OF PERAK STATE AND THE
STATE'S CHIEF MINISTER(AN UMNO MAN) OVER CONFLICTING
PREROGATIVES, AN ELECTION DISPUTE IN SABAH BETWEEN
OSTENSIBLE NATIONAL FRONT COALITION PARTNERS BERJAYA
AND USNO, AND POSSIBLE EXPULSION OF CONFESSED OF PRO-COMMUNISTS
ABDULLAH AHMAD AND ABDULLAH MAJID FROM PARTY. RE HARUN,
UMNO LEADERSHIP OPTED FOR WHAT APPEARS TO BE "HANDS OFF"
ATTITUDE LEAVING HARUN'S FATE TO JUDICIAL PROCESS (TEXT
OF RELEVANT PORTION OF UMNO STATEMENT RELEASED
MARCH 11 READS: "THE SUPREME COUNCIL COULD NOT
DO ANYTHING ABOUT DATUK HARUN'S 'REHABILITATION'
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WITHOUT AFFECTING THE PROCESS AND SOVEREIGNTY
OF THE LAW OF THE COUNTRY EXCEPT ADVISING HIM TO
APPEAL TO THE PARDON BOARD WHICH WOULD CONSIDER
HIS CASE FOR PRESENTATION TO THE YANG DIPERTUAN
AGUNG (KING) OR THE SULTAN OF SELANGOR (HARUN'S
HOME STATE)". END SUMMARY/INTRODUCTION.

2. SUPREME COUNCIL PUT OFF HANDLING OF THE
"TWO ABDULLAH'S" CASES AND RELATED ISSUES,
INCLUDING INVESTIGATION OF THEIR CONTACTS WITH
UNNAMED (SOVIET) EMBASSY AND POSSIBLE OFFICIAL
REPRISALS AGAINST OFFICIALS OF THAT EMBASSY.
ACCORDING UMNO OFFICIALS, SUBJECT WILL BE
CONSIDERED AT NEXT SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING IN
MONTH OR SO. RE PERAK DISPUTE, PARTY HAS
OVERRULED SULTAN, STATE'S FIGUREHEAD RULER WHO
HAD SOUGHT TO HAVE CONTROVERSIAL AND ALLEGEDLY
CORRUPT (BUT ELECTED) CHIEF MINISTER REMOVED,
APPARENTLY ON GROUNDS THIS WOULD SET UNFORTUNATE
PRECEDENT THAT MIGHT ENCOURAGE RULERS OF OTHER
STATES TO SEEK REMOVAL IN SIMILAR FASHION OF CHIEF MINISTERS THEY
DISLIKE. ALTHOUGH CONSIDERABLE
FENCE MENDING APPEARS NECESSARY TO SOOTHE PERAK
SULTAN'S RUFFLED FEATHERS, PERAK APPARENTLY WILL
HAVE TO LIVE WITH BOTH UNTIL NEXT ELECTIONS
HELD, POSSIBLY NEXT YEAR.

3. FINALLY, PRIME MINISTER HUSSEIN ONN IS OFF
TODAY (MARCH 14) ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE ON
FOUR DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO SABAH WHERE HE WILL OPEN
BERJAYA PARTY CONGRESS. PRESUMABLY HE WILL ALSO
TRY TO RESOLVE THE CONTINUING ANTAGONISM BETWEEN
BERJAYA AND USNO PARTIES, THE MOST RECENT
MANIFESTATION OF WHICH WAS BERJAYA SUPPORT FOR
INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE (AN EX-BERJAYA MAN) WHO
DEFEATED NATIONAL FRONT CANDIDATE (AN USNO MAN)
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IN SABAH BY-ELECTION.
UNDERHILL

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NNN

Message Attributes

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